

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed 17 April 2003 has been received and considered.

Responsive to the objections of the Examiner, applicant has amended the Abstract of the application to place it in proper form. In view of the instant submission, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw his objection.

Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) over Atake or WO99/20450. Applicant has rendered this rejection moot by canceling claims 5 and 6 without prejudice or disclaimer. By this Amendment, applicant has introduced new claims 8-13. Applicant respectfully submits that these new claims distinguish over Atake and WO99/20450.

In the independent claim 8, the half moulds have been specified as having respective compression moulding surface which are designed to apply a moulding pressure on a plate of thermoplastic material subsequent to the movement of the half moulds from an open to a closed position.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Atake nor WO99/20450 disclose compression moulding surfaces. The foil (S) of the Atake reference is not compressed between compression moulding surfaces of the half moulds. Furthermore, the filter material of WO99/20450 is not compressed between compression moulding surfaces. It follows that neither reference teaches the use of compression moulding surfaces.

Claim 8 also includes the limitation of a narrow section between the injection moulding seat and the respective molding surface. In Atake the narrow section (19) is positioned between the injection nozzle (70) and the injection moulding seat (9). Atake does not teach the placement of a narrow section between the injection moulding seat and the surface of the half mould (12) facing the foil (S). Further the surface of the half mould (12) is not a compression moulding

surface. Equally, the WO99/20450 reference fails to teach a narrow section between the injection moulding seat and a compression moulding surface. Here again the cited references do not disclose the claimed structure of Claim 8.

Not only do Atake and WO99/20450 not disclose the structure made subject to Claim 8, the cited references do not suggest such a structure. If the solutions according to Atake or WO99/20450 were applied to a compression moulding process, there would be a high risk of damaging the compression moulded panel or the coating layer of that panel which corresponds with the integral injection-moulded portions. This damage would result from the action of hot plastic material being injected under high pressure against the thermoplastic material of the panel. The instant invention seeks to alleviate this danger by providing a narrow section in the injection-moulding seat which is designed to produce a reduction in the pressure of the injected plastic material. The end result is that the injected plastic material will contact the plate under a low pressure thereby greatly reducing the risk of damaging the panel or the coating layer. Neither reference appears to recognize this particular risk nor the need to provide structure configured to address this concern.

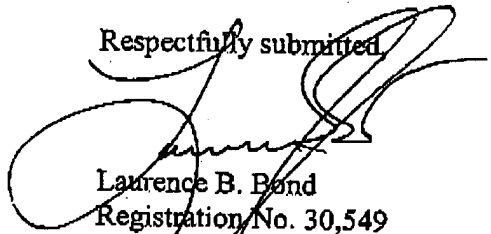
Claims 9-13 provide additional structural limitations which serve to further distinguish the claimed invention over the cited references. Claims 9-13 should be allowable not only in view of their dependency on Claim 8, but furthermore in view of the additional limitations contained therein.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Atake or WO99/20450 further in view of either Nakamura et al., Ballester, Tajiri et al, Starkey or Burger et al. Applicant has rendered the instant rejection moot by canceling claim 7 without prejudice or disclaimer. Notwithstanding this cancellation of Claim 7, applicant maintains that claims 8-13 distinguish over the cited references. As noted above, Claim 8 is distinguishable over Atake or WO99/20450 in view of its requirement of compression surfaces and the unique placement of the narrow section. Applicant respectfully submits that none of the secondary references identified above rectify or remedy

these particular failings of Atake or WO99/20450. It follows that all of the cited references, whether considered individually or in combination, either teach or suggest the subject matter of Claim 8, and by inference the claims dependent thereon.

In view of the considerations raised above, applicant respectfully requests examination of Claims 8-13 and reconsideration of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



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